

BLM News

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Elko Field Office, 3900 East Idaho Street, Elko, Nevada 89801 (775) 753-0200

DATE: November 10, 2005
ELKO FIELD OFFICE: 2006-07
FOR RELEASE: November 10, 2005

CONTACT: Mike Brown
(775) 753-0386
e-mail: Mike_Brown@nv.blm.gov

PARTNERS REPLACE CULVERTS FOR THREATENED TROUT

Populations of threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout, spotted frogs, and other aquatic species are getting a major boost for survival with the completion of an extensive culvert replacement project in Northeastern Nevada.

Newmont Mining, in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and other partners recently replaced culverts on Coyote Creek, Little Jack Creek, Beaver Creek, and Maggie Creek about 25 miles north of Carlin, Nevada. Those partners include Trout Unlimited, TS Ranch, Maggie Creek Ranch, Elko County, Eureka County, Nevada Department of Wildlife, Barrick Goldstrike Mines, Inc., and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The cost of the project was approximately \$250,000.

“This has been a tremendous project with long-term benefits for all aquatic species,” said Carol Evans, BLM Elko fisheries biologist and co-project coordinator. “The old culverts stopped fish and other species from moving upstream because of the downstream height of the culverts above the stream channel – which created an impassible ‘waterfall’ in most locations.”

“The culverts are designed to maintain a natural channel inside the culvert which simulates the stream bed. Now, the downstream end of the culverts is the same level as the stream channel. The result is that fish and other species can travel throughout the Maggie Creek system including the tributaries during spring runoff. This will allow formerly isolated fish populations to reconnect. Isolated populations are vulnerable to extinction.”

“The new culverts will also withstand flood events much better - like the flooding we had last spring. The roads will be much less likely to wash out. The culverts were designed by Porior Engineering in North Bend, Oregon and installed by LeGarza Exploration, Inc. of Elko, Nevada,” Evans concluded.

The culverts replacement projects are part of a larger effort to restore habitat for the

Lahontan cutthroat trout in the Maggie Creek Basin. In 1993, Newmont Mining, in cooperation with BLM, developed the Maggie Creek Watershed Restoration Project which focused on improving stream and riparian habitat conditions as mitigation for the South Operations Area Project. Replacing impassible culverts were the next logical step in the effort to restore native trout populations and the projects were developed as mitigation for Newmont's 2002 Leeville and South Operations Area Project Amendment. Trout Unlimited is also currently conducting studies to evaluate how the cutthroat trout are responding to the restoration work.

“It's a great cooperative effort among many people and groups, and Newmont is pleased to be a part of it. We're looking forward to an improved trout population,” said Paul Pettit Senior Environmental Manager for Newmont Mining.

-blm-